

CHINA

City, county officials encouraged to meet with public over concerns

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Leading officials at city and county levels are encouraged to meet members of the public in person and resolve difficulties raised by them promptly, a senior Party official said.

Guo Shengkun, secretary of the Communist Party of China Central Committee's Central Political and Legal Affairs Commission, told a meeting on social governance that efficient resolution of prominent problems is the best test of social management in cities, counties and townships.

Officials from political and legal organs at the meeting called for improvement of the mediation system and for community management officials to be given the ability to grasp and mediate appeals and problems in a timely manner. Leading officials should receive visits from ordinary people and visit grassroots areas themselves, participants noted, adding that local governments should capitalize on China's institutional advantage to resolve conflicts and strive to make local government the "terminus" of social conflicts.

To meet the goal, all governments in urban areas must address public security problems that prompt strong reactions from the public and strengthen their public security management and control capabilities in dynamic and information-based circumstances, participants said.

Decisions on some major issues that were adopted at the Fourth Plenary Session of the 19th CPC Central Committee in October stressed improving the crime prevention and control system and the public security system to advance China's modernization of the sys-

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Guo Shengkun, secretary of the CPC Central Committee's Central Political and Legal Affairs Commission

tem and capacity for governance.

Guo, who is also a member of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee, called on the government and political and legal organs in urban areas to take proactive measures and strengthen the rule of law to promote public security risk prevention and resolution and to address public security issues that trigger strong reactions from the public.

“We should strengthen institutional thinking, innovation and implementation of social governance and promote working mechanisms to address outstanding issues in the aspects of political security, social stability, public security and public services,” Guo said.

The meeting was told governments and departments in urban areas need to shoulder responsibilities for public security, and safety prevention and management in the fields of traffic, firefighting, logistics and hazardous explosive materials will be strengthened and improved.



Solid splashes

Icicles hang on the railings of a shoreline in Dalian, Liaoning province, on Thursday. A strong cold front howled through the coastal city during the day, freezing waves that crashed into the ice-cold railings.

LIU DEBIN / FOR CHINA DAILY

All-electric passenger ship a first

World-class technologies developed by Chinese engineers for Yangtze vessel

By ZHAO LEI in Shanghai
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China State Shipbuilding Corp, a State-owned shipbuilding conglomerate, recently delivered the country's first all-electric passenger ship to a company that transports passengers and runs sightseeing trips on the Yangtze River.

The *Junlyu* has been in commercial operation since mid-November with Wuhan Tourism Development and Investment Group, a State-owned tour operator in Wuhan, Hubei's provincial capital, according to the Wuhan Institute of Marine Electric Propulsion, a subsidiary of China State Shipbuilding Corp.

The institute, which designed and built the vessel's propulsion system, said in a statement on Thursday that

Junlyu is the first fully battery-powered passenger ship in China.

It said the ship is as quiet as a limousine and produces no polluting emissions. The ship's technologies and capabilities, all developed by Chinese engineers, are world-class, the statement said.

The institute, established in 1963, is the only developer of hydrogen and electric power systems in China's shipbuilding industry.

It said *Junlyu* is 53.2 meters long, 13.4 meters wide, and has a displacement of 410 metric tons. The ship can carry 300 passengers and sail at speeds of up to 19 kilometers per hour. At speeds of less than 13 km/h, it can travel for eight hours.

Before *Junlyu*, all China's passenger ships were powered by diesel-based engines or ones that



The all-electric passenger ship *Junlyu* sails on the Yangtze River. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

combined diesel and battery power, the statement said, adding that the only fully electric vessels were some small boats used by parks for visitors' entertainment.

Gui Wenbin, the head of the institute, said *Junlyu* features a series of technological advances, including high-efficiency, variable-frequency drive technology.

Eco-friendly propulsion is a direction of development for the shipbuilding industry and has become

the institute's major research subject, Gui said at Marintec China 2019, a marine industry exhibition, in Shanghai on Thursday.

Weng Yubo, an industry analyst with China State Shipbuilding Corp, said more than 50 all-electric ships have been delivered to operators around the world over the past two years, with Europe leading research on and deployment of such vessels.

He said electric vessels will soon have bright market prospects because a lot of passenger ships on China's rivers are nearing the end of their designed lives.

Chinese researchers have been looking for alternative modes of propulsion for the nation's aircraft and ships, which are heavily dependent on fossil fuels, for several years.

They have developed and flight-tested several prototypes of all-electric planes and are conducting research and developing key parts for an electrically powered helicopter.

Think tank report inspires Guangzhou's future of business environment

By CHEN HONG
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Guangzhou, capital of South China's Guangdong province, has made substantial progress in improving its business environment. But the city government needs to boost reform, efficiency and the legal environment and optimize the allocation of resources, according to a think tank report.

The Guangzhou Academy of Social Sciences, the only comprehensive research institute on humanities and social sciences in Guangzhou, released the report on Wednesday. It examines the city's business environment and provides solutions to make it better.

“The city government has set a clear target of creating a business environment with global competitiveness, or an excellent environment that is stable, fair, transparent and predictable,” said Zhang Yueguo, president of the academy.

He said a city's business environment is an important measure of its governance capability and performance, which is determined by the satisfaction of market entities and the public.

“The business environment must be better and better, with no boundary, because people's demands and needs will keep rising when civilization is advancing and society is developing,” he noted.

In the report, several indexes indicate consistent improvement to the business environment of Guangzhou.

The number of newly-added market entities in Guangzhou increased by 4.75 percent year-on-year to 221,700 in the first half of 2019. Of this, companies numbered 162,400, accounting for nearly 73 percent. It meant the city had nearly 900 new companies a day from January to June this year. During the same period, the foreign fund that had been utilized reached about \$4.1 billion, up 8.2 percent from a year before.

Meanwhile, about 1,500 projects made an accumulative investment of roughly 247.8 billion yuan (\$35.2 billion) in the first half of 2019, accounting for 55 percent of the annual target.



Experts share insights into how to improve a city's business environment at a forum on Wednesday in Guangzhou, Guangdong province. PHOTOS PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY



From left: Zhang Yueguo, president of the Guangzhou Academy of Social Sciences, Yin Tao, vice-president of the academy, and Liu Lizhi, vice-president of the Guangzhou Urban Strategy Institute under the academy.



Correspondingly, fixed assets investment surged by 24.8 percent, a record in six years. Private investment increased by more than 40 percent, higher than the average level of the country during the same period. It surpassed Beijing, which stood at 33.6 percent; Shanghai, 38.4 percent; and Shenzhen, 12.3 percent.

Liu Lizhi, vice-president of the Guangzhou Urban Strategy Institute under the academy that con-

ducted the research, said government policies have led reform of the business environment.

The city government announced a guideline in March to further optimize the business environment. It listed 43 measures to solve the issues local companies and the public are most concerned about.

One of the measures, Guangzhou will build a domestically leading smart governance

platform based on its digital government framework.

The platform will be able to share data from and consolidate services of different departments, Liu said.

As a result, the companies pay fewer visits to government departments for approvals of their investment projects.

To streamline the procedures and improve user experience, the government listed 10 areas that are key to improving the business environ-

ment. They include business registration, construction permit, real estate registration, tax payment, cross-border trade, approval to get electricity, water and gas, loan issue and intellectual property right protection.

Liu said all the government departments have worked out many innovative measures to solve problems for companies.

New demand emerges

When the barriers are gradually removed as the government's efficiency improves, companies will seek ways to lower costs and increase profits.

“The companies are inclined to choose cities where they can get talent, technologies and opportunities with relatively low costs and high efficiency,” Liu noted.

The research team then put all the elements that would affect the costs and profits into eight categories, which it believed can evaluate the business environment better.

The categories include environments for government services, financial market, legal guarantee, social costs, human resources, technological innovation, market demands and international interconnection, according to the report.

When comparing Guangzhou with other four leading cities — Beijing, Shanghai, Shenzhen and Hangzhou — the report found that Guangzhou needed to improve its market access, government credibility system and exposure of government decision information.

Other improvements should be made to strengthen the financial market and innovation environment, policies to attract top-level talent, generate more industry-leading companies and increase foreign capital and foreign trade, advised the report.

Yin Tao, vice-president of the academy, said there are several aspects to consistently optimize a business environment.

They include how to make clear the relations among the government, enterprise and the market, how to create a uniform and fair legal mechanism and system and how to ensure the stability, consistency and accuracy of policies, Yin said.

Yao Yongda, president of the private company association of the city's Tianhe district, said the government cares about private companies and has created many policies to support their development.

He said he hopes the government can set up a long-standing system to communicate with the companies so that they can learn about the needs of the companies and help them solve problems.

Bao Yajun, a researcher from Peking University, said government is playing a critical role in building a better business environment.

“It needs to break the barriers of different government departments and enable them to coordinate,” Bao said. “The government departments should work to meet the needs of companies.”